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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/710,056	11/10/2000	Lisa A. Demko	60709-00013	4136

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EXAMINER

WINTER, JOHN M

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3621

DATE MAILED: 05/20/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/710,056

Applicant(s)

DEMKO ET AL.

Examiner

John M Winter

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 March 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4,6-15 and 17-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 15 and 17-27 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,4,6,7,12 and 13 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2,3,8-11 and 14 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-4, 6-15, and 17-27 remain pending
Claims 5,16, and 28-55 are canceled

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Response to Arguments

The Applicants arguments filed on March 3, 2004 have been fully considered.

The Applicant states that the cited prior art references fail to disclose the amended features of "including reviewing submitted documents for completeness."

The Examiner states that these features are in the newly discovered reference Razin (US Patent 6,125,377).

See following rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1,4,6,7,12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ruffin, (US Patent No 6,219,654) in view of Conklin et al. (US Patent No 6,141,653) and further in view of Guinta et al. (US Patent 6,161,101), and further in view of Razin. (US Patent 6,125,377).

As per claim 1,

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Ruffin ('654) discloses a method for increasing efficiency of multi-level review of proposed business deals using an organizational management tool, the tool configured with a database of deals and a plurality of authorized reviewers for the deals, said method comprising the steps of:

creating a proposed deal by a user at a business unit included within a business entity , the proposed deal includes at least one of a detailed description of the proposed deal, a deal pitch, information supporting the proposed deal, and a cover letter, the proposed deal further includes a maximum approver associated with the business entity wherein the user selects the maximum approver based on at least one of approval limitations and deal type. (Column 6, lines 28-32)

enabling the coordinator to analyze the proposed deal, validate the information supporting the proposed deal, assign a risk manager to the proposed deal, and select a list of reviewers for the proposed deal. (Column 2, lines 6-18; also figure 3);

Ruffin ('654) does not specifically disclose "reviewing the submitted documents for completeness", Razin ('377) discloses "reviewing the submitted documents for completeness", (Figure 1) It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the Ruffin method with the Razin method in order to allow more efficient processing of the deal by reducing errors in the document..

Ruffin ('654) does not specifically disclose forwarding the proposed deal including the risk managers recommendation to a next review level within the business entity and analyzing the deal including the risk managers recommendation, Conklin et al. ('653) discloses forwarding the proposed deal including the risk managers recommendation to a next review level within the business entity (Column 25, lines 12-20) and analyzing the deal including the risk managers recommendation, (Column 25, lines 6-18) It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the Ruffin method with the Conklin et al. method in order to reject deals that are obviously nonprofitable.

Conklin et al. discloses the claimed invention except for repeating steps f and g until a maximum approver accepts or declines the deal, It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to repeat steps c and d until the next review level is the maximum approver wherein the maximum approver is then enabled to accept or decline the deal, since it has been held that mere duplication of the essential working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art. *St Regis Paper Co. v. Bemis Co.*, 193 USPQ 8.

Ruffin ('654) does not specifically disclose Utilizing a computer system to transmit the proposed del to a coordinator associated with the business entity; utilizing the computer system to transmit the proposed deal from the coordinator to the risk manager; receiving a review summary from the risk manager including a recommendation as to whether to approve the proposed deal. Guinta et al. ('101) discloses Utilizing a computer system to transmit the proposed del to a coordinator associated with the business entity;(figure 7A) utilizing the computer system to transmit the proposed deal from the coordinator to the risk manager;(figure 7A) receiving a review summary from the risk manager including a recommendation as to whether to approve the proposed deal (Figure 8) It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the Ruffin method with the Guinta et al. method in order to reject deals that are obviously nonprofitable.

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As per claim 4,
Ruffin ('654) discloses a method according to Claim 1,
wherein said step of creating a proposed deal further comprises the step of notifying a coordinator of the proposed deal.(Figure 10)

As per claim 6,
Ruffin ('654) discloses a method according to Claim 1,
wherein said step of utilizing the computer system to transmit the proposed deal from the coordinator to the risk manager further comprises the step of enabling the risk manager to recommend at least one of approve the proposed deal, approve the proposed deal with conditions and decline the proposed deal.(Figure 10)

As per claim 7,
Ruffin ('654) discloses a method according to Claim 1,
Ruffin ('654) does not specifically disclose adding comments regarding the proposed deal, Conklin et al. ('653) discloses adding comments regarding the proposed deal (Figure 15B). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the Ruffin method with the Conklin et al. method in order to preserve IP associated with the project.

As per claim 12,
Ruffin ('654) discloses a method according to Claim 1,
further comprising the step of notifying a submitter of the proposed deal of a resolution regarding the deal (Figure 10).

As per claim 13,
Ruffin ('654) discloses a method according to Claim 1,
further comprising the step of storing a review status of a proposed deal.(Column 8, lines 48-60; also Figure 10)

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 15, 17-27 are allowable.

Claims 2, 3, 8-11, and 14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims and complying with double patenting statutes.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

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Examiners note: Examiner has cited particular columns and line numbers in the references as applied to the claims above for the convenience of the applicant. Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings of the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested from the applicant in preparing responses, to fully consider the references in entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the examiner.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John M Winter whose telephone number is (703) 305-3971. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-6, 1st Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James P Trammell can be reached on (703)305-9768. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 305-7687 for regular communications and (703) 305-7687 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

JMW
May 16, 2004



JAMES P. TRAMMELL
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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